

Safety and Emergency Response Committee

DSA Advisory Board

Minutes of Meeting

Wednesday, December 1, 2004

California Community Colleges Building
1102 Q Street, 5th Floor, Conference Rooms A and B
Sacramento, California

Committee Members Present

Jo Ann Koplin*, Chair
Gale Bate*, Vice Chair
Kennith Hall*
Henry Reyes
Art Ross*
Diane Waters

DSA Staff Present

Elena Tarailo
Susan Georgis
Dan Levernier
Jim McCarthy
Elizabeth Schroeder
Mary Ann Aguayo

Committee Members Absent

Jack McMillan
Mike Modugno*
Steve Newsom

Others Present

Tony Ferrara, OES (by telephone)
Robert Kamm, LAUSD (by telephone)

*DSA Advisory Board member

1 **Call to Order**

2 Committee Chair Jo Ann Koplin called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed
3 everyone. Participants took turns introducing themselves.
4

5 **Review of July 27, 2004 Committee Meeting Minutes**

6 Ms. Koplin drew attention to the minutes of the July 27 meeting. Ms. Elena Tarailo noted
7 the minutes were approved at the last quarterly Board meeting.
8

9 **Overview of Agenda**

10 Ms. Koplin said the meeting would feature a number of reports in response to information
11 requests from the committee, including an update from Ms. Diane Waters, California
12 Department of Education (CDE) on school emergency plans and emergency supply bins, a
13 presentation from DSA on criteria used to evaluate schools and other facilities for use as
14 emergency shelters, and a report from Mr. Tony Ferrara, Office of Emergency Service, on
15 the status of DSA's emergency plan. Ms. Koplin suggested starting with the report from Mr.
16 Ferrara.
17

18 **Emergency Plan Update**

19 Mr. Ferrara said committee members had in front of them the rough draft of the DSA
20 emergency plan and noted further refinements are needed, including an introductory
21 section.
22

23 Mr. Ferrara stated that the purpose of the DSA Emergency Plan is to provide guidance to
24 staff in working through the activation of emergency operations. He noted the questions
25 identified on the agenda regarding the tagging process, inspector qualifications, and post-
26 earthquake school inspections are addressed in the document.
27

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1 Mr. Ferrara commented that Administrative Order 03-03 clarifies the State Architect's broad
2 responsibilities and role in inspecting schools after major earthquakes. The order indicates
3 the Division of the State Architect will participate in the tagging process and conduct
4 training to qualify staff to conduct inspections. Mr. Ferrara said the emergency plan
5 postures the State Architect in an organizational form that allows efficient disaster response
6 and school inspections.

7
8 Mr. Ferrara reviewed the table of contents, scope, and sections of the draft plan. He noted
9 the pages with five purple tabs and red type highlight the information gaps that still need to
10 be filled. Mr. Ferrara drew attention to Part 5, the Hazards Analysis section, and the last
11 two tabs, which call for agency-specific information. He said the plan identifies the primary
12 natural disaster threats for each of the major urban areas of California. For example, he
13 noted, downtown Sacramento's major hazard is flooding.

14
15 Mr. Ferrara asked committee members to return their draft copies to Mr. Dan Levernier
16 after the meeting. Ms. Koplin encouraged committee members to submit comments as
17 well.

Discussion and Questions for OES

18
19 Mr. Kenneth Hall said he saw no provisions in the matrix regarding staff response in off-duty
20 hours, and he recommended considering that problem. He noted staff employees may be
21 unable to reach their place of work due to flooding or other problems. Mr. Ferrara said the
22 mobilization aspect of the plan covers this issue, and the annexes provide specific resource
23 lists and notification rosters. He added that this need will be addressed in more detail
24 during the staff training process.

25
26
27 Ms. Koplin asked whether the plan calls for a communication system for first-responders.
28 Mr. Ferrara responded that the mobilization section deals with how DSA maintains contact
29 with staff people during emergencies. He acknowledged that traditional forms of
30 communication may be inoperable after a disaster. Ms. Koplin said the committee talked in
31 previous meetings about radio systems and other forms of communication. She
32 recommended articulating those provisions clearly in the plan.

33
34 Mr. Hall asked if key DSA staff people will receive priority cards from OES so they can
35 access disaster areas. Mr. Ferrara said the extent of OES credentialing for state
36 emergency responders has been an issue for some time. He noted law enforcement
37 people are being trained to recognize emergency responders and allow them to pass
38 through official checkpoints.

39
40 Mr. Hall said OES has the ability to provide high-priority phone lines for disaster
41 responders, and he suggested looking into that possibility. Mr. Ferrara stated that he would
42 check with OES' telecommunications staff to find out what was available for state agencies.

43
44 Mr. Ferrara asked if there were any questions on the hazards analysis section. Mr. Art
45 Ross asked if the emergency plan was tailored to the offices and buildings currently under
46 DSA jurisdiction. Mr. Ferrara responded that the plan looks at facility and organizational
47 impacts of various hazards based on the likelihood of their occurrence and facility
48 vulnerability. He noted the definitions are the same as those used in federal programs, and
49 the plan contents meet federal requirements.

50
51 Ms. Koplin asked what criteria were used to designate earthquakes as the highest priority
52 hazard for the Bay Area and Los Angeles. Mr. Ferrara explained that the designations

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1 were based on probabilities of major earthquakes on faults in those regions. He expressed
2 concern that OES' Coastal Division was housed in an "unhardened" and potentially
3 vulnerable building on Clay Street. Mr. Ross pointed out that hazard and probability define
4 risk, and vulnerability is specific to each location and building.

5
6 Mr. Ferrara recommended sticking with the basic format required by the federal
7 government. Mr. Gale Bate suggested clarifying some issues further within an annex. Mr.
8 Ferrara agreed that this might be a good way to address specific locations.

9
10 Mr. Hall asked how OES anticipated using the information in the future. For example, he
11 asked if OES would consider relocating its facilities based on a vulnerability analysis. Mr.
12 Ferrara responded that he saw the emergency plan being used primarily as a planning tool
13 to coordinate disaster response.

14
15 Mr. Ferrara drew attention to Section 6.0, the Emergency Operations Section, and the
16 charts showing the organization of the DSA operations center and the regional office
17 incident command system. He explained that requests for assessment of school buildings
18 will be handled through one of the three OES regional offices. The requests will be
19 forwarded to the state operations center for assignment of a mission number and
20 authorization from the Department of General Services.

21
22 Mr. Ferrara encouraged the committee to visit OES' new facility in Rancho Cordova in
23 conjunction with the next meeting in Sacramento. He said members of various state
24 agencies are represented in the operations center, so response efforts can be coordinated
25 and deployed most efficiently.

26
27 Ms. Koplin noted the committee is awaiting recommendations from DSA regarding how
28 best to evaluate school buildings for shelter use before and after events.

29
30 Mr. Ferrara emphasized the need to work closely with the Red Cross to coordinate shelter
31 evaluation and designation efforts.

32
33 Mr. Ross stated that the DSA Advisory Board voted a year or so ago not to require higher
34 standards for buildings used as emergency shelters.

35
36 Mr. Ross proposed recommending that DSA work with others to pre-evaluate school
37 facilities and designate buildings suitable for shelters; he also emphasized the importance
38 of making sure those buildings are inspected first so they can be occupied as soon as
39 possible.

40
41 Mr. Ferrara clarified OES' role in providing care and shelter for people in disaster-affected
42 areas. He noted OES does not evaluate shelters for structural safety, nor does OES
43 designate which buildings are used as shelters.

44
45 Mr. Henry Reyes said the Seismic Safety Commission's post-disaster role is limited to
46 conducting hearings and gathering information.

47
48 Ms. Koplin expressed her opinion that pre-evaluating buildings for structural safety would
49 make sense because there is not always time after a disaster to thoroughly check a
50 building before it is occupied.

51
52 Committee members observed that DSA lacks the resources to conduct pre-disaster

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1 evaluations; they suggested making local jurisdictions or school districts responsible for
2 evaluating and pre-designating specific buildings.

3
4 Ms. Koplin noted it would be helpful for the committee to at least develop guidelines for
5 evaluating and designating buildings used as shelters. Ms. Waters emphasized the need
6 to tie in with local jurisdictions.

7
8 Ms. Koplin suggested finding out if DSA would have any potential exposure to liability if
9 emergency shelter buildings are not evaluated for seismic safety.

10
11 Mr. Ferrara said he would take the committee's feedback back to OES' Technical
12 Assistance Branch, and he promised to report back to the committee.

13
14 Ms. Koplin questioned who determines the location and contents of emergency supply bins
15 on school campuses. Mr. Kamm said his district conducts annual inspections. He noted
16 emergency bins and supplies should be incorporated as part of the design of new school
17 facilities. Ms. Koplin commented that LAUSD has dedicated emergency staff people; she
18 questioned the adequacy of smaller districts' emergency preparedness efforts.

19
20 Ms. Diane Waters reviewed the regulations applicable to school emergency plans and
21 emergency supply bins. She said the California Department of Education's jurisdiction is
22 limited, and there is no uniform statewide standard.

23
24 Ms. Koplin commented that the committee might be able to play a productive role by
25 partnering with CDE and working with DSA to provide districts with the information they
26 need to develop effective emergency plans and maintain adequate emergency supplies.

27
28 Mr. Ferrara reported that in reviewing his files, he found an OES document regarding use
29 of SEMS for schools that contains checklists and advice about storing emergency supplies.
30 He suggested updating the document and including more guidance regarding bin locations
31 and contents.

32
33 Ms. Koplin and committee members agreed that this would be an excellent vehicle for
34 conveying information to school districts.

35
36 Mr. Ferrara said he also found a 1995 OES document called "Schools as Post-Disaster
37 Shelters" that sets out guidelines for school districts.

38
39 Mr. Ferrara offered to provide copies of both OES documents to the committee.

40
41 Ms. Waters said she discovered a CDE publication, "Crisis Response Box," that provides
42 tools for school disaster responses. She provided copies for committee members.

43
44 Ms. Koplin recommended coordinating the committee's next meeting with the Disaster
45 Resistant California Conference in Sacramento in May, 2005. She suggested reviewing
46 the conference agenda during the lunch recess and identifying sessions that might be
47 particularly worthwhile.

48
49 Ms. Koplin thanked Mr. Kamm for his participation, and she invited Mr. Ferrara and Mr.
50 Kamm to attend the next meeting.

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1 At 12:40 p.m., the committee recessed for lunch. Ms. Koplin reconvened the meeting in
2 Conference Room B at 1:30 p.m.

3
4 Ms. Koplin noted that during the lunch break, participants developed a chart showing how
5 various state and local agencies interact during an emergency. She said the group was
6 unable to determine where CDE fits in the process. Ms. Koplin reviewed the chart and
7 committee members discussed and clarified the lines of communication.

8
9 Ms. Koplin reported that the school districts she contacted told her the local fire protection
10 agencies had keys to the emergency supply bins on school sites. She noted the supply
11 bins are maintained by local fire departments and are provided for their emergency
12 responders; the supplies are not necessarily for the students. Ms. Koplin expressed her
13 opinion that the committee might be able to provide useful guidance in terms of the location
14 of supply bins and the process by which shelters are structurally evaluated and designated
15 prior to occupancy.

16
17 Mr. Ross observed that there are certain schools that are known to be vulnerable, and their
18 status should be noted so they are not used as shelters. Committee members said some
19 bins are used to store tents at sites where buildings may not be suitable for shelters.

20
21 Mr. Hall suggested it would be helpful to know what pertinent documents are already
22 available. Ms. Koplin proposed this as the committee's next step. She asked Ms. Waters
23 to provide a list of applicable state and federal statutes.

24
25 Mr. Ross noted bins are not mandated for all schools, although some districts have their
26 own policies and requirements. He suggested that the committee think in terms of
27 voluntary guidelines and criteria.

28
29 **Mr. Ross made a motion that the committee suggest that the DSA Advisory Board**
30 **initiate correspondence between DSA and OES the relationship between a school**
31 **district's safety plan and its integration with the safety plan of its municipality or**
32 **local jurisdiction.**

33
34 Mr. Ross observed that there seems to be no thoughtful process at the present time
35 regarding who will provide the bins, supply and maintain them, and have access in the
36 event of an emergency.

37
38 Mr. Jim McCarthy noted the Bay Area Regional Earthquake Preparedness Project prepared
39 a lengthy document with checklists and advice regarding school emergency supplies. He
40 said the publication was sent to OES in March of 1989. Participants mentioned other
41 documents with emergency supply checklists and information for schools.

42
43 Ms. Koplin clarified that Mr. Ross' motion proposes that the committee ask DSA and OES
44 to clarify the coordination of safety plans between local jurisdictions and school districts.

45
46 **The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.**

47
48 Ms. Koplin suggested that Mr. Hall articulate a motion to determine what pertinent
49 documents already exist.

50
51 **Mr. Hall made a motion to conduct a literature search to identify documents pertinent**
52 **to shelters.**

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Ms. Koplin noted the committee had also discussed the need to clarify federal and state statutes regarding use of school sites as shelters.

With that amendment, the motion was seconded by Mr. Ross and carried unanimously.

Meeting Summary/Next Steps

Ms. Koplin said she would forward all committee members a copy of the program for the Disaster Resistant California Conference to be held May 15 through 18, 2005. She suggested reviewing the program and identifying sessions of particular interest.

Ms. Koplin proposed that the committee meet in conjunction with the Disaster Resistant California Conference next May. She noted the January 18 DSA Advisory Board meeting might also provide a good opportunity for a committee meeting.

Ms. Koplin suggested reviewing the issues the committee has not yet addressed. She noted those topics include criteria for use of portable buildings as emergency shelters and charter schools in leased facilities. She observed that other issues discussed by the committee in the past will be addressed in the emergency plan.

Public Comments

There were no members of the public who wished to address the committee.

New Business

Mr. Reyes announced that the Seismic Safety Commission's report on the safety of public, private, and charter schools would be finalized on December 9. He noted the Commission became concerned about the state's seismic safety policies after the collapse of a private school in Italy killed a number of students. Mr. Reyes said the Commission's ad hoc committee compared applicable laws and codes, conducted interviews with building officials and school district representatives, and developed a series of findings and recommendations to improve the seismic safety of California's public and private schools.

Mr. Reyes offered to provide committee members with copies of the report once it is available.

Next Meeting

Ms. Koplin noted the committee had talked about inviting local fire and police representatives to attend a future meeting to get a better understanding of their relationships with school districts.

Ms. Koplin recommended inviting the Alameda schools group to make a presentation on their emergency preparedness program to the entire Board, possibly at the January meeting.

Ms. Waters suggested going to Alameda County to watch one of their drills. Committee members proposed visiting the OES center in Rancho Cordova at some point in the future.

Ms. Koplin noted LAUSD invited DSA participation in its drills and mitigation plan process.

Committee members tentatively decided to schedule the next meeting for January 19, 2005.

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Adjournment

3

Ms. Koplin thanked all participants for attending. There being no further business, the

4

Safety and Emergency Response Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.